



## Botulism Checklist for Public Health Nurses:

### Signs and symptoms:

- ☐ Establish the presence of **signs and symptoms** consistent with botulism<sup>1</sup>:
  - recent (1-10 days) consumption of traditionally prepared Native foods (seal, whale, salmon, beaver tail or paw, seal oil, etc.) or home canned foods (tomatoes, green beans)
  - neurological: dry mouth, dysphagia, diplopia, blurry vision, bilateral dilated or unreactive pupils
  - gastrointestinal/urinary: abdominal pain, diarrhea, intestinal ileus, nausea, vomiting, urinary retention
  - muscular: dyspnea, fatigue, respiratory muscle paralysis, symmetrical skeletal weakness

### Report and identify suspected food source:

- ☐ Call Section of Epidemiology (SOE) and **report any suspect botulism** cases immediately:
  - **907-269-8000**, Monday - Friday, 8:00 - 5:00 or **1-800-478-0084**, after hours
- ☐ Verify **food history** with patient(s) or others regarding what traditionally prepared Native foods were eaten. Advise about risks associated with consumption: [http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Documents/01-Internal/MMM\\_Chapter\\_BotulismFoodborne.pdf](http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Documents/01-Internal/MMM_Chapter_BotulismFoodborne.pdf)
- ☐ Interview any others who may have shared the meal. Review signs and symptoms of botulism; advise to D/C consumption of the suspected food(s) and seek immediate medical care if symptoms develop. Ensure contacts are safe and **monitored for 10 days**. Not everyone who consumes the same food may become ill with botulism toxicity. (See monitoring form)
- ☐ Facilitate safe collection and shipment of suspect food samples. Alaska State Public Health Laboratory (ASPHL) 907-334-2100 can provide guidance on food collection and shipment. Seal all oil or liquid samples with duct tape. Address to **Special Pathogens, ASPHL** and include *Anchorage Lab Request Form*. <http://www.dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Labs/Documents/LaboratoryTests.pdf>
- ☐ Collaborate with SOE, Health Aide and hospitals to monitor contacts and treat (BAT) subsequent cases.

### REQUIRED specimens\*

#### **Collect blood before administration of antitoxin!**

- ☐ **20 mls of whole blood** (no anticoagulant) or 10 mls serum. **Note collection time on lab slip.**
- ☐ **10-50 grams of stool** (prefer before antitoxin, can be collected at any time)



Think **20-10** before antitoxin!

- ☐ **20 mls of emesis** or gastric aspirates
- ☐ Collect **suspected food(s)** if available, **refrigerate**, and ship to ASPHL.

**\*Epi Nurse will track all lab specimens** and request assistance to collect as needed

<sup>1</sup>Botulism in Alaska-A guide for physicians and health care providers 2011: <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dph/Epi/id/Pages/botulism/monograph.aspx>  
P:\Infectious\INFT-TB\2015 MMM\Botulism - Foodborne (updated 10/2/2015).